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Not necessary for DAP to call for elections, says PKR veep

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PETALING JAYA — Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) said it is not necessary to call for a snap election in Penang as the chief minister has the solid support of the public.

Its vice-president, Dr Xavier Jayakumar, said he did not see any reason to do so because the DAP has the overwhelming support of the public despite the corruption charges against Lim Guan Eng.

“Hence, to call for a snap election does not make any sense,” he said.

Dr Xavier was commenting on reports Penang DAP leaders were mulling over holding a snap election to determine the support for the opposition pact and Lim’s leadership.

He said the move would be a waste of time, money and energy and the outcome of the election would be “fruitless”.

“DAP has to think about this deeply as there are more important issues we need to focus on. A snap election would not benefit the opposition pact. It would only aggravate the pact’s current rocky situation,” he said.

Dr Xavier said the Opposition needs to concentrate on how to be more united as the recent by-election results in Sungai Besar, Selangor, and Kuala Kangsar, Perak, reflected their supporters’ disappointment with the pact.

“The most important issue now is to get our act together and also to ensure straight fights against the Barisan Nasional (BN) in the next general election,” he said.

PKR vice-president Chua Tian Chang, also known as Tian Chua, said he would leave the matter to the DAP to decide.

“I leave it to them to discuss whether to have snap polls. Our principle has always been consistent to seek justice,” he said.

Chua said Penang DAP leaders knew better the situation in the state and he was confident they would act in the people’s interest.

PAS deputy president Datuk Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man said a snap election was not viable given the current political scenario.

“Guan Eng is innocent until proven guilty, and if the DAP decides to call for snap polls,

it would only show the party was not serious in upholding the spirit of democracy,” he said.

Tuan Ibrahim said if the election took place, DAP would only betray the trust that was given by the people.

Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah) deputy Salahuddin Ayub said any decision on a snap election that involved the parties in the pact had to be discussed first.

“We will be waiting for the DAP to bring up the issue at the next presidential council meeting. We will act after we reach a conclusion,” he said.

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) School of Politics and International Studies lecturer Md Shukri Shuib said to hold snap polls to fulfil a personal agenda was a betrayal of the voters’ trust in the state government.

“DAP is obviously not walking the talk. It shows the DAP has put its political interest above the needs and mandate of the public,” he said.

Shukri said the people might view a snap election as a political game by Pakatan Harapan.

“It is not necessary. It could backfire on the leadership instead,” he said.

Penang Umno liaison chairman Datuk Seri Zainal Abidin Osman said a snap election would be a waste of the people’s money.

“It is unreasonable that millions of ringgit will be spent just to have a referendum because Lim Guan Eng refuses to go on leave or relinquish his position as chief minister when he is facing two corruption charges in court,” he said in a statement.

Zainal Abidin asked if Lim was facing a crisis of confidence among Penang assemblymen because that would make more sense for a snap election to be called.

“Is the call to have fresh polls an attempt by DAP and Pakatan Harapan to divert people’s attention from the alleged corruption that could be exposed when Lim goes on trial?” he asked.

He said DAP should now focus on appointing an acting chief minister and

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instruct Lim to go on leave until the case was settled to protect the integrity of the state government.



Lim with his supporters after being charged with corruption at the Penang High Court on July 1.